

# **Adsum**

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## LETTER FROM THE RECTOR

Dear Friends and Benefactors,

The titular feast of Mater Dei Seminary, the Divine Maternity of the Blessed Virgin Mary (October 11), was instituted by Pope Pius XI in 1931 to commemorate the 15th centenary of the Council of Ephesus. It was in the year 431 at this Third Ecumenical Council under Pope Celestine I that the errors of Nestorius were condemned.

Nestorius, appointed patriarch of Constantinople in 428, objected to the title “Mother of God” applied to the Blessed Virgin Mary. He erroneously maintained that the Blessed Virgin gave birth only to the man Jesus, in Whom the Son of God later on dwelt as in a temple. His heresy was two fold: that Jesus was two Persons, one human and the other Divine; and that Mary could not be called the Mother of God.



*Solemn High Mass for the  
Feast of the Divine Maternity*



*Fr. Gregory Drahman, CMRI, chants the Gospel*

The chief adversary of Nestorius was St. Cyril, the bishop of Alexandria who defended the Catholic truth against this heresy. Before the Council of Ephesus, St. Cyril had written to the monks in Egypt:

I do not know how to express my astonishment when I see Christians hesitating to give the Holy Virgin the title of Mother of God. Since our Lord Jesus Christ is God, how can the Virgin, who gave Him birth, not be the Mother of God? The Apostles have taught us this truth, even though the word *Theotokos* be not found in their writings. The Holy Fathers never hesitated to use the term... You may perhaps ask me: “Was, then, the Holy Virgin Mother of the Divinity? We know that the Eternal Word existed before Mary, and that from all Eternity He abides in the Bosom of His Father. But in the Incarnation there is a Mys-



tery, which we can in some measure compare to that of human generation. All men who have ever been born are made up of soul and body. Our mothers gave us the corporal substance into which God has infused a soul. This fact does not hinder us from saying that they gave birth to a *man*... The union of soul and body makes up the one person who is called *the man*, therefore she who gives birth to a man is truly his mother. After the same manner that the soul is united so strictly to the body—so indissolubly that one cannot separate them in the human person without destroying the man—in the Incarnation the Word was united to Human Nature to be born in the one and Indivisible Person of Jesus Christ our Lord and God.

The papal condemnation of Nestorius was reiterated by 198 bishops assembled at the Council of Ephesus.

The Catholic doctrine that Jesus Christ is one Person with two natures (Divine and human), is proven from the divine plan of Redemption. The Redeemer needed to be man, for it was man who had sinned; and the Redeemer had to be God to make infinite satisfaction, for man had sinned against God, an infinite Being. Nestorius' heresy destroyed the whole economy



*Jon Davis (Colorado) and Nathan Williams (Nebraska), our newest seminarians, are received as CMRI postulants*

of redemption, for neither of the two persons (as he erroneously held) would have been able to fulfil the Redemption; the Divine Person could not suffer nor die, and the human person could not make infinite satisfaction. How wonderfully was the Redemption of man brought about by God sending His only begotten Son into the world!

Sacred Scripture is most explicit about this doctrine. St. John begins his Gospel, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God and the Word was God... and the Word was made flesh" (John 1:1). The Prophet Isaias foretold, "Behold a virgin shall conceive and bear a Son and His Name shall be called Emmanuel (God with us)." (Is. 7:14) And again Isaias prophesied, "For unto us a Child is born and unto us a Son is given and His Name shall be called... God the Mighty." (Is. 9:6) Lastly, in the Gospel of St. Luke the Angel Gabriel announced to Mary, "the Holy Ghost shall come upon thee and the power of the Most High shall overshadow thee. And therefore also, the Holy shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of the Most High." (Luke 1:35) Again from the Gospel of St.



*Chanting of the Epistle by Creagh Goble*

Luke, Elizabeth, full of the Holy Ghost, exclaimed to Mary, “Whence is it to me, that the Mother of My Lord should come to me?” (Luke 1:43) It is for this reason that the early Church called Mary the Theotokos, the God-bearer.

St. Louis de Montfort in his treatise *True Devotion to Mary* dwells on this mystery:

It was only through Mary that God the Father gave His Only-begotten to the world. Whatever sighs the patriarchs may have sent forth, whatever prayers the prophets and the saints of the Old law may have offered up to obtain this treasure, for full four thousands years — it was only Mary who merited it and found grace before God by the force of her prayers and the eminence of her virtues. The world was unworthy, says St. Augustine, to receive the Son of God directly from the Father’s hands. He gave Him to Mary in order that the world might receive Him through her.

The Son of God became man for our salvation; but it was in Mary and by Mary. God the Holy Ghost formed Jesus Christ in Mary; but it

was only after having asked her consent by one of the first ministers of His court.

How appropriately then has the Seminary been named under the title of the Mother of God. As she is the Mother of the Eternal High Priest, she is our powerful patroness to assist us in the formation of our future priests. How important that our seminarians be truly devoted to the Mother of God! She will use them as her instruments to spread the reign of Christ the King throughout the world. This is the very point that St. Louis de Montfort reiterated in his book *True Devotion* with these beautiful words: “It was through the most holy Virgin Mary that Jesus Christ came into the world, and it is also through her that He has to reign in the world.”

In the spirit of charity, please pray for the soul of Sr. Maria Mechtilde, CMRI, who passed away this month. She was a truly dedicated religious, slave of Mary, and to the very end of her seventy-eight years here on earth, a true laborer in the vineyard of Our Lord.

With my prayers and blessing,  
Most Rev. Mark A. Pivarunas, CMRI

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## Encomium on the Mother of God

*delivered by St. Cyril of Alexandria at the Council of Ephesus*

Hail, O Holy Mystical Trinity, Who has called us all together to this church of Mary, Mother of God.

Hail Mary, of all things in the world most precious.

Hail Mary, Mother of God. It is thanks to thee that the Shepherds chanted with the Angels, “Glory to God in the highest and peace on earth to men of good will.”

Hail Mary, Mother of God, it is thanks to thee that the Wise Men brought their Gifts, guided by the Star.

Hail Mary, Mother of God, it is thanks to thee that the Glorious College of the Apostles was chosen by the Saviour.

Hail Mary, Mother of God, it is thanks to thee that the Baptist leaped in his Mother’s womb, and that the torch was lowered before the Light that never can be extinguished.

Hail Mary, Mother of God, it is through thee that

the ineffable kindness of our God, of which the Apostle tells, has appeared amongst men.

Hail Mary, Mother, of God, it is from thee that has appeared the true Light, who says of Himself: “I am the Light of the world.”

Hail Mary, Mother of God, it is thou who didst give birth to the conqueror of death and hell.

Hail Mary, Mother of God, it is thou who hast placed in this world its Creator and Redeemer, our Guide to the Kingdom of Heaven.

Hail Mary, Mother of God, it is by thee that every faithful heart is saved.

We salute thee, O treasure worthy of veneration, that belongest to all mankind. Crown of virginity! Sceptre of orthodoxy! Temple that can never be destroyed! Place of Him who is not held by place!

We salute thee, Mary, Mother of God.

# ***Father Connell Answers Moral Questions***

*by Very Rev. Francis J. Connell, C.S.S.R., S.T.D., LL.D., L.H.D.*

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## ***How Early in an Illness may there be Anointing of the Sick?***

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**Question:** If a person is afflicted with a lethal illness, such as cancer, but it would seem that he will probably live for a year or more, may Anointing of the Sick be administered?

**Answer:** Regatillo-Zalba make this statement relative to the problem presented by our correspondent:

“If the disease brings with it a sure danger of death, but remotely—for example, after many months, as in the case of tuberculosis—Extreme Unction is validly conferred. Whether this can be done licitly depends on the circumstances—the state of the ailment, the spiritual good of the sick person, the scandal that might arise from the fact that a person is anointed while he is still fulfilling his tasks, etc.”

Capello gives a similar answer.

I do not favor these restrictions concerning the *lawfulness* of the Sacrament when there seems to be a considerable period intervening before death. I believe that in the case described, the administration of the Sacrament will be both valid and licit. For, as soon as there is a truly probable danger of death from some bodily condition now present, the Sacrament can be greatly beneficial to the sick person. Its powerful graces will comfort and console him in the hours of sadness that will naturally come during the period of waiting. Moreover, the secondary effect of restoration to health can best be hoped for when the Anointing is given in the very beginning of the lethal sickness. Finally, it must be remembered that not infrequently a person who is afflicted with a dangerous illness that apparently will not cause death until after a number of months or even a year suddenly succumbs. Hence, I hold that as soon as there is a solid probability that a person has some affliction that will cause death, though only after a considerable period of time, he may be validly and lawfully anointed. If any scandal is feared from the fact that one who is able to be at his daily tasks is given the Anointing (and I doubt that any scandal will arise from this), the Sacrament could be given secretly, with only the sick person aware of it.

In favor of this more lenient opinion Noldin-Schmitt can be quoted: “A sick person can be validly and lawfully anointed if he is suffering from consumption or some similar disease, even if it is foreseen that he will live some months or even an entire year.” Damen also writes: “Extreme Unction can be given validly and lawfully as soon as the sick person is in danger of death, although not yet proximate.”

While a sick person *can* be anointed in the early stages of a lethal disease, there is no *obligation* for him to seek the Sacrament until death seems more proximate — even according to the opinion of those who believe that *per se* there is a grave obligation to receive Anointing of the Sick.

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